Tax Exemption and Duty Relaxation on Raw Material

1452. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set a target of atleast 200 million telephones by 2007;

(b) if so, whether Government would require equipment worth Rs. 1,00,000 crores;

(c) if so, whether his Ministry has already approached Finance Ministry on the terms the indigenous manufacturing sector are facing as the industry has been demanding tax exemption and duty relaxation on raw materials and components; and

(d) if so, to what extent the Finance Minister has agreed and by when Government are likely to start taking action for improving telephones as suggested by the Ministry to achieve it by 2007?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Government envisages to achieve a total of 200-250 million telephones (fixed and mobile) by the year 2007.

(b) to (d) For achieving a total of 200-250 million telephones by the year 2007, the service providers would require equipment worth Rs. 1,00,000 crore to Rs. 1,50,000 crore. Indigenous telecom equipment manufacturing sector and also some of the multinational companies have submitted their proposals for giving impetus to indigenous manufacturing, including tax exemption and duty relaxation, for meeting the growing requirements of the service providers. These proposals are normally considered as part of recommendations for the Budget.

Demand of Postal Employees

1453. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the All India Postal Extra Department Employees Union